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**ECONOMIC FEASIBILITY OF THE MULTI-USE OF
PUBLIC SCHOOL FACILITIES - A SPECIFIC
APPLICATION TO CHURCHES**

By

David B. Stuhr

B.S., E.E., The Citadel, 1962

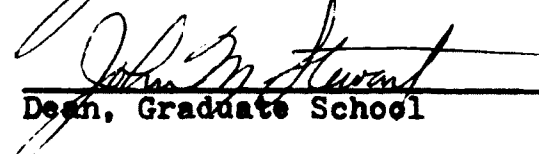
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Rationale for the Multi-Use of Public School Facilities

There is a definite opportunity for a more economic use of public school facilities. Recently, the President's Commission on School Finance reported to President Nixon that both public and private schools were in a state of crisis that goes considerably beyond financial aspects.¹ The cost of education is increasing at a rate which will presumably become unacceptable to the public in the future. There is a major crisis in school buildings across the country. Today there is a greater number of students in our schools, thus requiring more and larger buildings with more and higher paid teachers. One can read in the daily newspaper about new tax levies or bond issues for schools being passed or voted down by the taxpayers or about teachers demanding higher salaries. High construction costs, difficult to obtain and expensive credit, and even the loss of revenue when sites for school buildings are removed from the tax rolls, all contribute to the taxpayers' burden and thus his unwillingness to

¹Great Falls Tribune, May 5, 1971, Sec. I, p. 2, cols. 2-3.

pay for new schools. School boards or local taxing authorities need to find an opportunity to create revenue for schools, not necessarily to reduce operating costs. Joint occupancy is a revenue opportunity. Whether or not it is economically feasible for churches to lease school property is a question to be answered in this paper.

The Educational Facilities Laboratories has defined the concept of joint occupancy of land and buildings:

School buildings that pay for themselves, privately built public schools, and schools linked into an urban environment all comprise a concept known variously as joint occupancy, mixed use, or multiple use of land and buildings. The concept also includes combining schools with housing, commercial space (rental and office), community services and facilities, other civic agencies such as health units and municipal offices, recreation facilities, parking garages, and so on.²

Some joint occupancy, multiple use projects are small cities unto themselves or facilities linking a city's business core with adjacent neighborhoods. This is done by combining schooling with other forms of community and cultural services into one site. Schools, county health, job training center, and a variety of other civic and social functions and agencies are co-located so an individual can come to one place for all the services he requires from the city as is planned in Pontiac, Michigan.³

²Clinchy, Evans, Joint Occupancy: Profiles of Significant Schools. Report from Educational Facilities Laboratories, First printed: June, 1970 (New York, N.Y., EFL, Inc., 1970) p. 3.

³Chase, William W., "Design for Regenerating a City," reprinted from American Education, March, 1970.

Joint occupancy can be formed by sharing the same building or occupying separate buildings on the same site. Both forms of joint occupancy have their advantages and disadvantages depending on the circumstances of the project. Shared sites imply that separate buildings on the same site are used and the income from one building is used to finance the other. Shared facilities imply the multiple use of the same buildings whether the same space is used or space is "stacked." An example of "stacked" space would be for one user to use one or two floors and the second user to occupy the remainder of space.

The segment of joint occupancy which is most in use at present is the combining of schools with community services and facilities. This is also known as the community school concept. This concept changes the five-day school for children to an opportunity center for everyone of all ages in the whole community.

Joint occupancy is not new. It can be traced back to early U. S. history. Boston's Faneuil Hall was built in 1761 and designed to house public meetings on the upper floor while the first floor was used as a butcher shop and slaughter house.⁴ Combining schools with community services and facilities dates back to 1821 when Boston's English High School, which is claimed to be the first truly public high school in

⁴Clinchy, p. 3.

America, shared a building with the Town Watch and a fire engine company.⁵

One can see all around the multiple use of facilities, such as complexes with various types of stores, businesses, doctors' offices, etc., on different levels of apartment and commercial buildings. But if a real economic gain is to be realized by the taxpayer, school buildings must be the common denominator in joint occupancy programs, since schools are usually the largest of municipal building programs.

Reasons for Joint Occupancy

The main reason for joint occupancy is economic, the saving of money and resources. Land is getting more scarce and, therefore, more expensive. Even though many cities are in financial trouble, they are still growing and expanding. Cities are having trouble obtaining land for public use and then when land is obtained there is a great deal of competition between use for education, low cost housing, and recreation. Many times, slum areas are leveled to make room for new facilities, schools included. The people that have to be relocated cause an increased need for new low cost housing and an additional requirement for land. It is realized that many cities in Montana are not faced with the scarcity of land problem now, but many fiscal problems which are facing

⁵Ibid., p. 3.

the cities dictate a more economic use of municipal funds. However, in the larger cities, the inner city schools must be replaced and land is not available in downtown areas without clearing out old facilities.

Cities are faced with a decreasing real tax revenue. The real income of Great Falls, Montana is decreasing even though property evaluations are increasing rapidly. The dollars drawn from taxes versus the city's operating costs results in a decreasing real income.⁶ In addition, the increasing amount of public and private non-profit, tax exempt land reduces the property tax income. Through joint occupancy, tax exempt church property could be turned into revenue producing property. If churches would relinquish their present building sites to commercial use and lease or rent public school facilities it would increase the property tax base therefore providing an economic gain to the community. This is assuming the land relinquished by churches would have some commercial value due to its location.

In many communities resentment is growing against high property taxes, and taxpayers are looking closely at the cost of school buildings. In many cases communities reject bond issues for new schools because debt service for such bonds raises the tax rate.⁷

An example of the growing opposition is shown by the citizens

⁶Ingram, John C., "An Analysis of Financial Problems for the City of Great Falls" (unpublished M.B.A. professional paper, University of Montana, 1971) p. 18.

⁷Clinchy, p. 4.

of Cut Bank, Montana voting down a school bond issue for the second consecutive time.⁸

There are also social and cultural arguments for the multiple use of school facilities, specifically for the community school. With the unrest in America today, there is a great need to create communities in which people of varied ethnic backgrounds, racial origins, and income levels exist as one community. Mr. Joseph Anderson has suggested that love is the lubricant needed to solve problems in human relations.⁹ What better way to bring people together in love, through the "community school concept," than in a church worshipping together.

Present Programs

The most common argument for joint occupancy of schools, whether shared buildings or shared sites, is to make the school partially or wholly self-supporting. The concept of self-supporting schools works best when the private part of the joint occupancy is a big money maker such as apartment or commercial space. However, in many cases when schools are used by other non-profit or municipal agencies, money cannot be made but it can be saved. For instance, if a low income

⁸Great Falls Tribune, May 6, 1971, Sec. I, p. 7, cols. 1-4.

⁹Campbell, Clyde M., "Sports and Their Facilities," The Community School and Its Administration, VII (April, 1969), p. 5.

high rise housing project shares sites or buildings with a school the land has a double use and a city can save land costs that would have been incurred with two separate sites. The second site is made free for other public use or a private income producing development or the costs involved in purchasing a second site are avoided.

The New York City Educational Construction Fund is an excellent example of the success of self-supporting schools. The Fund was established in 1966 for building joint occupancy projects.

. . . May 1, 1970, the Fund has 23 such projects¹⁰ under construction or in planning which will accommodate 22,300 children and represent about \$118 million in investment capital.¹¹

There are several private schools which have also ventured into the real estate business. Trinity School, an Episcopal boys school in Manhattan, was faced with the problem of whether to stay in the city or move to the suburbs because its facilities needed to be modernized and expanded. Trinity Housing, Inc. was formed as land owner and housing developer in the new project. A new addition to the school was built which provided all the needed facilities for Trinity School including a combined chapel and auditorium. A 25-story apartment building was constructed above the

¹⁰Projects as used here refers to joint-occupancy projects with income derived from the private part of the project to reduce or pay the cost of building the school.

¹¹Clinchy, p. 11.

school facilities. The required parking for the 200 apartments was located where the school's playfield used to be, and the entire roof of the parking garage was covered with artificial turf and is now available for outdoor playspace. Trinity School's profits on the housing construction are limited to six per cent by New York law but the school obtained through a deal with New York City at almost "no cost" thirty thousand square feet of land valued at slightly over \$1 million.¹²

Friends Select School in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania is another example of a private school turned landlord. Faced with the same problem as Trinity School, Friends Select leased one of its three acres to Pennwalt, a large chemical firm with headquarters in Philadelphia, for 99 years. The rents from the 99-year lease should bring the school \$200,000 a year. The interest and debt retirement costs on the \$3.2 million new school facilities occupying the other two acres of land are only \$175,000 a year. Again, the school building's roof area was covered with artificial turf for playspace.¹³ In these situations, the schools have no programmatic relation to commercial or apartment complexes which share these facilities and/or space.

Another aspect of joint occupancy is the concept of linking the school with the urban environment. This is truly

¹²Ibid., p. 18.

¹³Ibid., p. 7.

joint occupancy where a school is combined with another on several different enterprises, public or private, with the different parts related structurally and functionally. In this situation, the feeling of a small city is created and linked to the neighborhood and to the larger city. Some examples of this type project are the Human Resources Center in downtown Pontiac, Michigan (under construction)¹⁴ and the Drake-South Commons School in Chicago, Illinois.¹⁵

The Human Resource Center (HRC) in Pontiac was designed to provide urban renewal. The schools located in HRC were to replace two predominantly black and four all white schools. The intent was to provide an area where children and adults from different racial, cultural, and economic backgrounds could come together and benefit as one community. The center was designed to provide education for approximately 2,300 elementary school children and house adult education facilities and community services for health, welfare, social and recreational needs, and family counseling. Public service is provided by these facilities. The space was provided free of charge. Special attention was given this project by the state legislature (a law was changed) and by HUD (a new policy was initiated).

¹⁴Chase, William W. "Design for Regenerating A City," reprinted from American Education, March, 1970.

¹⁵Clinchy, p. 28-33.

A private developer in Chicago obtained the renewal rights to an area which had been cleared of slums. The private developer tried to create a desirable, stable, racially and economically integrated community. A parking lot, a shopping center, a school (leased to the Chicago school system) and facilities for community activities were included in the development. The housing included space for 1,406 families with moderate, middle, and high incomes. Facilities in the community building (which includes the school) are shared. Parking is provided by the building on the ground level with a mixture of community, school, and church functions on the upper two floors. The room used by the church also is the school's auditorium or the community's social room. A special community organization was created to administer community facilities. The organization worked on the profits from the shopping center which were turned over to the community by the developer.

There are several other means being employed to more economically utilize school facilities. A brief explanation can be found in Appendix I.

Summary

Essentially, there are three necessary prerequisites to a joint occupancy program. First is hard work. There must be a willingness of at least two parties to sit down and discuss and plan the project. Often a project is the result of long, painstaking discussion and collaboration with

give and take on the part of all participants.

Second, it is sometimes necessary for one participant to act as an over-all coordinating agent. Essentially, he must provide the leadership necessary to arrive at a decision agreeable to all. The legal mechanisms must be created if they do not already exist to make joint occupancy possible. In order for some present joint occupancy projects to be established, some laws had to be changed and some new ones enacted, some governmental regulations had to be altered, some deals made, and in some cases new corporations had to be formed. There is no reason to believe that these actions cannot or will not be repeated in the future if progress is to be made.

CHAPTER II

JOINT OCCUPANCY OF SCHOOLS BY CHURCHES

In order to investigate the interest in the economic feasibility of the joint occupancy of public school facilities with churches, information was sought through a questionnaire. Questionnaires were sent to the Superintendents of Schools, School Boards and church officials in thirteen Montana cities and towns. Catholic churches and schools were excluded because they generally have their own parochial school system with facilities available to them. An explanation and samples of the questionnaires can be found in Appendix II.

Advantages Gained

There are several advantages gained through the joint occupancy of schools by churches. Better utilization of facilities would result from such a program in that the school would be used more hours per week. Presently, for the summer school program, only the two Senior High schools out of twenty-eight schools in Great Falls, Montana are used. Seven are used for summer recreation programs. During the winter months, there is essentially no use of public schools on Sunday. Only the Vo Tech School is utilized twelve months a year for adult education and special education. The use of

the twenty-eight other schools does vary from year to year. Churches use facilities primarily on Sundays and during the evenings. Thus, church and school use are somewhat complementary in regard to time. In addition, more facilities such as a gymnasium or kitchen/cafeterium, could be made available to the leasing churches of the community.

The city or town would benefit from such a program by expanding its tax base, assuming that the churches involved disposed of their land and present facilities. It would not be economical for a church with a relatively new building to give up its facilities unless they could realize their investment. However, many churches need to be reconditioned or have to have new buildings built. Some congregations outgrow their facilities. In these cases, it might pay a congregation to rent school facilities rather than build their own facilities.

Another advantage, although only to the church, is that schools could provide a temporary home while the church builds new facilities, decides where to settle, i.e., rent or build, or is forced by a tragedy to seek temporary quarters.

Problems Foreseen

Many problems can be foreseen in a joint occupancy program between schools and churches.¹ The extent of these

¹The problems discussed in this section which could result from a joint occupancy program came from several sources. Some originated as a result of a logical, unbiased analysis attempted by the author. Other problems were stated in the questionnaires returned by church officials.

problems may vary depending on the personalities involved, the amount of community use a school receives, and the number of activities involved in the church's program. It is believed that most of these problems can be eliminated or at least reduced to an acceptable level. Each problem will be stated briefly. Possible solutions to reduce or eliminate these problems will be proposed later.

The problem expressed most frequently by respondents to the questionnaire involved the scheduling of activities. Some respondents expressed specific scheduling conflicts involved with weekday use of schools, evening use, special events such as weddings, funerals, etc., and conflicts where churches require access to facilities at all times. Others expressed scheduling conflicts in general as a problem area.

The problem expressed with the next greatest frequency could be classified as psychological or emotional. For most members of a congregation, the school facilities would not look like a church sanctuary from either an architectural or artistic viewpoint. A psychological atmosphere is very important for worship and school facilities might lack a worshipful atmosphere even though decorated. There might be a lack of identity as a church and this might have a negative effect on attendance and membership. There seems to be a great need for people to have and own their own church property and be able to say "we built it," or "we own it." Nineteen per cent of the church replies expressed a belief that this need exists in the American people today. One congregation rented school

facilities from 1952 to 1956 and found it adequate and reasonable. However, according to the pastor, the people lacked the feeling of having a church home.² One respondent expressed the belief that church buildings are more important to too many Christian people than charitable use of their moneys.³

Third was the problem of the separation of church and state. The question arises as to whether it would be legal for tax provided facilities (schools) to be used to benefit churches. Since churches have rented public school facilities in Montana in the past, the legal question of separation of church and state does not seem valid. However, the legality of prayer in public schools was never questioned until Madeline Murray forced a decision in the United States Supreme Court, so the possibility that a legal question could be raised is not impossible. The joint occupancy program is aimed at benefiting both school and church, but not at the expense of the taxpayer. Another problem area mentioned with frequency was that there would not be enough school buildings to meet the "prime time" demands of churches from eight to twelve on Sundays. It seems most respondents sighting the conflict in the number of churches to the number of schools had no interest themselves in renting school facilities.

²The questionnaire with this information had no return address so no additional information could be obtained. However it was postmarked Great Falls.

³Another questionnaire with a Great Falls postmark.

Another problem is encountered when trying to improve or create a worshipful atmosphere. School facilities are not readily adaptable to church use. Altar fittings are hard to set up on a temporary basis. There would be some inconvenience in setting up and taking down these temporary decorations. In addition to these problems and the problems listed in Table 2-1, it is also possible that an individual would be unwilling to bequeath or will the church money and/or land if the church did not have its own home.

Other problem areas foreseen by the respondents are listed in Table 2-1. The number of respondents citing a specific problem is shown in the right hand column. A total of twenty respondents could foresee no problems involved in a joint occupancy program with schools and churches.

Proposed Set-Up

A joint occupancy program with churches using school facilities must be set up in a manner which will minimize or eliminate any foreseeable problem. The program would be strictly a business transaction between the school and church with a contract giving either party the right to terminate the agreement, with notice, for violations by the other party. The following are proposed solutions to eliminate or minimize problems which may be involved with a joint occupancy program in which churches rent school facilities.

Probably the biggest problem outside of the psychological or emotional problem would be that of scheduling all the

TABLE 2-1
 PROBLEM AREAS FORESEEN IN THE JOINT OCCUPANCY
 OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS BY CHURCHES

Problems Foreseen	Number of Respondents Citing This as a Problem
Scheduling Conflicts:	
General	5
Weekdays	6
Evenings	5
Special Events	2
Access at All Times	8
	—
Total	26
Psychological:	
Church Needs Own Home, Identity	11
Lack of Worshipful Atmosphere	7
	—
Total	18
Separation of Church and State	15
Conflict in Number of Churches to Number of Schools	9
School Facilities Not Readily Adaptable to Church Use	6

Note:

Only two respondents stated problems which they felt would not be a problem, the remainder stated only problems they could foresee or none.

TABLE 2-1--Continued

Problems Foreseen	Number of Respondents Citing This as a Problem
Attitudes of School Officials	5
Conflict of Interest	4
Convenience of Location	3
Disposition of Present Facilities by Churches	3
Accidental Breakage and Wear and Tear Could Cause Tension	3
Storage of Church and Sunday School Supplies	3
Adequate Signs to Locate Facilities and Rooms	2
Abuse of Public Property	2
Office and Administrative Space For Churches	1
Temporary Quarters Not Good for Potential Congregation Growth	1
Change of Scene Needed for Children	1
None	1

activities of the school and church to avoid conflicts. There is definitely a problem involved in the scheduling of special events such as weddings, funerals, and weekday meetings. In these situations, even if they could be scheduled not to conflict with school activities, it would be less distracting for the students in their classrooms if weddings were held in a different building, for example another church. However, most weddings are probably held on Saturday or Sunday which reduces the problem. Funeral services could be held in the chapel of the funeral home or in another church.

Scheduling to provide access to school facilities at all times would depend on a number of factors. It would be determined by the activities (the number of people attending, the frequency of occurrence, and the nature of the activity) if access at all times is feasible.

Special or normal weekday meetings large enough to be held in the school auditorium could be scheduled so as not to conflict with school activities. Smaller meetings could be held in the church parsonage. The parsonage can also double as church office and as a mailing address for the church. During special and religious seasons such as Christmas and Easter when many services might be held on weekdays, many conflicts will be avoided by school holidays. A suitable schedule could be worked out for week nights (depending on church needs.) At least one or two nights a week could be set aside by the school for church use. Then it would be up to the church to schedule their activities on these nights.

To prevent conflicts on Sunday, the church should be granted exclusive use of the schools. No interference should be permitted without the church's permission.

Decorations could be emplaced to solve the psychological problem of a lack of worshipful atmosphere. The easiest way to solve this problem is to incorporate design changes into new schools which would make them more adaptable to church decorations. An altar "on wheels," a movable pulpit, and other fittings could be designed and built. Temporary or convertible sacraments are used in military chapels for different denominational use. These sacraments are set up or converted with very little effort or time involved.

The possible problems of separation of church and state, public complaint, and the attitudes of school officials could be solved through public relations and the education of the public as to the purpose of joint occupancy of schools by churches in the light that it is a business transaction, under contract, with churches completely independent of school control.

The possible problem that the number of churches desiring joint occupancy with schools would be greater than the school space available can be reduced through the use of one school by two churches. However, this would increase the scheduling problem. The most logical solution in this case would be for two church congregations to share one facility. In this situation, the two congregations would have to sit down and do a little scheduling, some give and take on desired

times. The joint occupancy of church facilities has been proven to work. An example of how it works can be seen in the setup of the chapel on a military installation. The different denominations make it work because they have to but no ill will is apparent between them. St. John's Lutheran Church renting from St. Francis Episcopal Church in Great Falls, Montana is another example of how shared facilities can work.

The following is a proposal of ways to minimize or eliminate other problems listed in Table 2-1.

An additional locker or cabinet could be added to each classroom and auditorium or cafetorium used by the church for storage of Sunday School and church supplies when not in use. Office and administrative space could be included in the parsonage. Adequate signs could be prepared so people would have little or no difficulty in locating the proper facilities or rooms for specific purposes. These signs could be either of a permanent nature or the moveable billboard type. Abuse of public property can be reduced by closing off the part of the school not being used. Many schools, Loy Elementary in Great Falls, for example, have lockable "gates" at strategic points to close off separate wings of the school when not in use. However, even without additional use of public schools, vandalism still occurs.

CHAPTER III

RESULTS OF THE SURVEY

Explanation of Survey

Although this survey covers only thirteen cities and towns in Montana, it is believed that the practices, attitudes, and opportunities set forth in this paper are representative of the state. The cities and towns in Montana were classified according to population¹ as large (greater than 60,000), medium (between 10,000 and 60,000)² and small (between 1,000 and 8,000).³ One large city was randomly selected which represents fifty per cent of the large cities in Montana. Two out of six medium cities were selected which represents 33 1/3 per cent of the medium cities. Finally, ten out of fifty-two small cities were surveyed which represents 19.4 per cent of the small cities. Each city was surveyed in depth. The Superintendent of Schools and every church, except Catholic churches, in each city selected for

¹Montana, State Highway Commission, Official 1971 Highway Map: Montana.

²Although the medium range covers cities and towns of between 10,000 and 60,000, there are no towns larger than 30,000 in this category.

³There is only one town excluded by the gap in population size between the small and medium range.

the survey was sent a questionnaire. Twenty-six questionnaires were sent to the thirteen Superintendents of Schools and the thirteen Chairmen of the Boards of Education and 187 questionnaires were sent to the churches. A sample of the questionnaires is provided in Appendix II. The questionnaires were prepared in as brief a form as possible in order to receive a fair percentage of replies. Eleven of the Superintendents of Schools completed and returned the questionnaires and a twelfth returned employment data giving a 92.3 per cent reply rate. No questionnaires were returned by the School Boards. One hundred and seven churches replied. However, only ninety-seven completed the questionnaire. Eight churches felt the questionnaire did not apply to them because of their beliefs or operational structure, one was not actually a church but a church administrator, and one refused to complete the questionnaire on the grounds that the idea of churches renting public school facilities violated the provision in the Constitution for the separation of church and state. An additional eight questionnaires were returned because of inadequate or wrong addresses. Ninety-seven replies out of one hundred and seventy questionnaires (excluding eight which felt the questionnaire did not apply, eight wrong addresses and one church administrator) yielded a fifty-seven per cent reply rate.

Churches were classified according to congregation size as large (congregation greater than 500), medium (between 100 and 499) and small (less than one hundred). No significant

differences could be found in the churches' desires and attitudes based on the size of the congregation. However, churches were divided into groups in order to evaluate cost data. (See Table 3-1).

Present School Policy

Every city participating in the survey allows outside organizations the use of school facilities after hours, some of course with reservations. All charge some rental fee. One school district charges only for the use of the gymnasium, one only for the use of kitchen facilities, and one only for the use of kitchen facilities when these facilities are used for a profit making purpose. The rental charges for the various facilities can be seen in Table 3-2. Eight charge a flat rate while three charge a variable fee. The majority of the school districts (eight) have special rental fees or reduced rates for churches, patriotic purposes, charity, etc. All eleven school systems allow the Parent-Teacher Association, Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts the use of school facilities free of charge. (See Table 3-3).

Five of the schools⁴ (45.5 per cent) do allow the use of school premises to churches for the teaching of sectarian, denominational or religious doctrines. Four (36.4 per cent) do not grant the use of school facilities for such use and one

⁴Schools refers to school district or area of supervision of the school superintendents surveyed.

TABLE 3-1
MONTHLY COSTS FOR CHURCHES

Congregation Size	No. of Churches in Group	Operational Cost Per Person		Avg. Cost Per Person	Avg. Total Cost Per Month
		High	Low		
Less than 50	8	\$ 8.57	\$.80	\$ 3.15	\$ 102.00
50 to 99	11	4.70	.84	2.74	202.00
100 to 199	15	12.50	.83	4.84	455.00
200 to 299	8	6.60	.38	1.83	398.00
300 to 399	7	4.30	.50	1.63	554.00
400 to 499	2	1.63	.69	1.16	462.50
500 to 599	2	.97	.65	.81	412.50
600 to 699	5	1.00	.60	.69	436.00
700 to 999	3	2.14	.80	1.27	933.33
1,000 to 1999	5	2.28	.25	1.11	1,320.00
2,000 and above	1	1.10	1.10	1.10	2,200.00

Notes:

These costs do not include the costs of the parsonage.

The total number of hours each church is used was not obtained. Therefore it is not possible to calculate an average hourly cost of church usage.

The questionnaire asked for approximate monthly costs of operating the church, excluding the cost of the parsonage. The cost received may or may not include the pastor's salary. These costs vary from church to church due to the difference in accounting methods.

TABLE 3-2
RENTAL CHARGES FOR VARIOUS FACILITIES

City	Facility			
	Auditorium	Gymnasium	Rooms	Kitchen-Cafeteria
Great Falls ¹	--	--	--	--
Butte	\$75.00	variable	variable	variable
Missoula ²	\$ 4.75 hr.	\$ 4.75 hr.	\$ 4.75 hr.	\$ 4.75 hr.
Belgrade ³	--	\$25.00	\$10.00 1st 2 hrs, \$5 hr. thereafter	\$25.00
Big Timber	\$25.00 if for profit	--	variable	variable
Browning ⁴	--	--	--	--
Harlem	None	None	None	\$25 if for profit
Plains	None	\$10.00	None	None
Plentywood	\$20.00	\$20.00	\$ 5.00	\$15.00
Red Lodge	None	None	None	\$15 day
Roundup	\$25.00	\$25.00	\$1 hr. HomeEc, \$3 hr. Shop	Included with Gym

¹See Table 3-5 for a detailed rate schedule.

²Missoula has flat hourly rate, \$4.75 hr. It is assumed this rate applies regardless of facility used since rate was not mentioned in connection with any facility on questionnaire returned.

³Rifle-Archery Clubs, Scouts, 4-H, etc., no charge if used immediately after school. Community non-profit groups, no charge unless extra janitorial time is required.

⁴See Table 3-7 for breakdown of rate schedules. It is assumed that Group III would be highest group churches would be categorized into.

TABLE 3-3
SCHOOL POLICY ON THE AFTER SCHOOL USE
OF SCHOOL BUILDINGS

City:	Do you allow outside organizations to use school buildings after hours?	Do you charge a rental fee?
<u>Large:</u>		
Great Falls	Yes	Yes
<u>Medium:</u>		
Butte	Yes	Yes
Missoula	Yes	Yes
<u>Small:</u>		
Belgrade	Yes	Sometimes
Big Timber	Yes	Yes if used for profit
Browning	Yes	Yes
Harlem	Yes	Yes if used for profit
Plains	Yes if no conflict	Yes
Plentywood	Yes	Yes
Red Lodge	Yes	Only Kitchen
Roundup	Yes	Yes

TABLE 3-3--Continued

Is rental chg. flat or variable?	Special rates for church, charity, etc.?	Do you chg. PTA, Boy or Girl Scouts?
--	No	Yes
variable	Yes	Yes
Flat (hourly)	No	Yes
Flat	Yes	Yes
variable	Yes (free)	Yes, if they wanted it
Flat	Yes	Boy/Girl Scouts
variable	Yes	Yes
Flat	No	Boy/Girl Scouts
Flat	Yes	Yes
Flat	Yes, no rental	Yes
Flat	No	Yes

school has never had a request for such use. The Superintendents of Schools were also asked if they would rent school facilities to churches on a long-term basis. To this question, one replied yes, three said no, two responded that presently no requirement exists, and four said any request for such use would require school board approval. In no case would any superintendent actively seek an agreement with churches for the use of school facilities on a long-term basis even if a profit could be made. (See Table 3-4).

Church Desires

Of the ninety-seven churches participating in the survey, thirty-eight expressed a desire for additional or expanded facilities. The facilities desired ranged from more classrooms to complete new facilities. The number of respondents desiring additional facilities and the type facilities they desired are shown in Table 3-6. More classroom space was the additional facility most desired. A gymnasium and/or recreational space was desired by fourteen of the respondents. Nine respondents expressed a desire for a fellowship hall or community club type space which would be suitable for dining and convention use or for use by youth groups. Kitchen facilities were expressed by four churches as being desired. Three churches expressed a desire for an educational unit or church school. Two desired a larger chapel. Office space and storage space were listed once each as a desired additional facility.

TABLE 3-4
SCHOOL POLICY ON CHURCH USE
OF SCHOOL FACILITIES

City	Do you grant the use of school premises to churches for teaching of sectarian, denominational or religious doctrines?
Great Falls	Yes
Butte	No requests
Missoula	No
Belgrade	No requests
Big Timber	Yes
Browning	Yes
Harlem	Yes (Vacation Bible School)
Plains	No
Plentywood	Yes
Red Lodge	No
Roundup	No

TABLE 3-4--Continued

Would you rent to churches on a long-term basis?	If a profit could be made, would you actively seek this type of business with churches?
Requires special permission from School Board.	No
Depends on School Board recommendation.	Not Known
Requires School Board action.	--
No policy.	No
Requires School Board action.	--
No.	No
No, present Board policy does not permit.	--
No.	No
Yes.	No
No.	--
No policy.	No

TABLE 3-5
RATE SCHEDULES FOR GREAT FALLS
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

-
-
- (1) Evening shall mean a five hour period commencing at 6:00 o'clock p.m.
 - (2) Afternoon shall mean five hour period commencing at 12:00 o'clock noon.
 - (3) Hourly rates may be obtained by dividing by (3).
 - (4) For use of facility for a sustained afternoon and evening engagement, multiply by \$1.75.
 - (5) Wages paid to custodial personnel for services rendered are not included in following rates:

Stadium - \$225 for an eight hour period.

Gymnasiums:

Great Falls Senior High School - \$100 plus \$50 for each additional function in the same day.

C.M. Russell High School - \$150 plus \$50 for each additional function in the same day.

Junior High Schools - \$30.

Elementary Schools - \$25.

Multipurpose Rooms and Kitchens - \$25.

Auditoriums:

High Schools - \$50.

Junior High Schools - \$50.

Other Rooms - \$10.

Vacation Bible Schools - \$25 per week per room for one-half day use.

In addition to determining what additional facilities were desired, the survey was intended to determine church attitudes and desires relating to the joint use of public school facilities on a long-term lease basis. (See Table 3-6). Twenty-one churches (21.7 per cent) felt their congregation would accept the idea of renting school facilities if their operating costs could be reduced and nine of these churches (9.3 per cent) would actively seek joint occupancy with schools under such conditions. Eight churches (8.25 per cent) felt their congregations would accept the idea only in an emergency or if they were forced to abandon their present building for some reason. Four churches (4.13 per cent) replied that the idea was unacceptable at this time because they were presently in new buildings but would consider the idea in the future. Three churches (3.1 per cent) presently rent their facilities, one from another church, one from the YMCA and the third did not say from whom they rented their facilities. Eight churches have rented school space in the past and only one found it unsatisfactory.

Is It Economically Feasible?

This is a most difficult question to answer. Sometimes there must be a trade-off between how much someone wants something and how much that someone wants to pay for it. This question will be evaluated strictly in terms of cost for facilities. However, it will be difficult to determine since

TABLE 3-6
CHURCH ATTITUDES AND DESIRES RELATING TO THE
JOINT USE OF PUBLIC SCHOOL FACILITIES

Churches Which:	Size of Congregation	No. of Churches Responding
Feel their congregation would accept the idea of renting school space at reduced operating costs.	small medium large Total	4 15 2 <u>21</u>
Feel their congregation would accept the idea only in an emer- gency or if forced to abandon present facilities.	small medium large Total	4 4 0 <u>8</u>
Have a new building, but would consider the idea in the future.	small medium large Total	0 0 4 <u>4</u>
Rent present facilities.	small medium large Total	2 1 0 <u>3</u>
Have rented school space in the past.	small medium large Total	3 2 3 <u>8</u>
Desire additional facilities:	Total	38
Classrooms		17
Gymnasium/Recreational Space		14
Fellowship Hall/Community Club		9
Kitchen		4
Educational Unit/Church School		3
Larger Chapel		2
Office Space		1
Storage Space		1

Note:

Size of congregation was classified as follows: small, less than 100; medium, 100-499; large, greater than 500.

some of the school rental fees were given on an hourly basis or for certain periods of time. In no case did any school return a rental fee estimate for church use of school facilities on a long-term basis.

In order to determine the economic feasibility of churches renting from schools, an average monthly cost per person was calculated for congregations in the different size groups.¹ These costs do not include the operation of the parsonage. Data from eighteen churches could not be used in the computations because the respondents did not give either the operating costs data or the size of their congregation. The congregation size, the average cost per person, and the average total operating cost is shown in Table 3-1. It appears that the cost of operating a church building for two hundred or more people is more economical on a cost per person basis than the cost of operating a church for less than two hundred people. It would seem that in some communities such as Browning, it would be more economical for churches to rent school facilities. Browning's church groups should fit the fee schedule for Group II.

¹ Congregations were broken down into smaller groups according to size to gain more meaningful operational cost data. Cost data varied to a great degree probably because of the different account methods used by the churches. The majority of the "high" costs per person have buildings under five years old and it is assumed that their operating costs were higher due to debt financing. In several cases, it was clearly visible that for the size of the congregation, there were many more facilities available.

(See Table 3-7). However, even if churches were classified as Group III, it would still be more economical for most churches to rent school facilities. For an average of four Sundays a month, they would have to pay approximately \$10 per day or \$40 a month for the use of the auditorium. The only classroom for which Browning states a fee, \$5, is the Home Economics room. It is assumed that other rooms would be free or a fee to cover custodial costs would be charged. Depending on amount of usage and custodial costs, churches with less than fifty people could save up to \$60 a month. (Churches with less than fifty people have an average monthly cost of \$102.) In Great Falls however, the same church would have to pay \$25 plus approximately \$5.13 per hour custodial cost for each use of a multipurpose room (auditorium type room) and \$10 for each single classroom. This would add up to approximately \$35 per week or \$140 per month for just the church facilities not including custodial costs. This would definitely not be economical for a church of less than fifty people. However, it could very well be more economical for a church congregation of 100-199 or more to rent school facilities since their average costs per month are \$398 or higher. This would also depend on the number of classrooms used each Sunday and how much week night use the school received. Ten dollars plus custodial costs can add up fast. Consideration of the size of the auditorium or multipurpose room must also be taken into account. A church with a very large congregation possibly may not be able to use school space because

TABLE 3-7
RATE SCHEDULES FOR BROWNING SCHOOLS

Groups	The Fee Schedule for the Use of the Building and Rooms
Group I	This group includes those organizations whose activity is solely for the benefit of the school and non-sectarian youth organizations. They may have free use of the facilities by arrangement. The term "youth" is to include only those students currently enrolled in the schools.
Group II	This group includes those organizations which sponsor a non-profit activity for community benefit. They will be charged \$5 for the use of the building.
Group III	This group includes any acceptable political party. The rate includes \$10 for the auditorium and \$5 for the home economics room.
Group IV	Community organizations sponsoring any approved activity for their own benefit, \$20 for the use of lunchrooms or the auditorium. The gymnasium for athletic events, \$50 per day.
Group V	Outside organizations sponsoring activities for their own benefit, \$100 per day for the use of the gymnasium for athletic events, \$50 for the use of the auditorium, \$10 for the use of the home economics room.

Source: Montana, Browning School Board Policy Handbook, "Community Use of School Facilities," Section 9.01.

it may be too small.

Malmstrom Air Force Base paid approximately \$75 per week for the use of Loy Elementary School in Great Falls in 1969. This fee included the standard rate, custodial costs on an hourly basis, utilities, and material and supplies used. At least two church services and one Sunday School session were held each week covering a four to six hour period.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, it appears more economical for churches in most communities to rent school facilities. However, Great Falls and Butte may be an exception. There are numerous factors to be considered. The size of the congregation, the size of the school, the amount of use involved, and the community involved, to name the most important factors. It would be necessary to study each case individually to determine the actual economic advantage or disadvantage present in a joint occupancy project involving church use of public school facilities in Montana.

Some of the fees charged by schools are ridiculously low such as the five dollars which Browning charges its users in Group II. This fee would not even cover custodial costs for an hour in Great Falls' Public Schools. In this case, the public is subsidizing the use of facilities. The Superintendents of Schools were asked when the last cost analysis was made to determine the rental fees charged. Only four school districts have made a cost analysis in the past ten years; one in 1964, one in 1966, and two in 1970. One responded that his school was in the business of community service and did not give any information as to when the last cost

analysis, if any, was made. Four superintendents did not know when the last cost analysis was made. In one school district, the last cost analysis was made in 1938. If it is to be economically feasible for schools to rent their facilities to churches or anyone else and earn revenue, the schools should know what their operating costs are. Without accurate and current cost data, it is improbable that the schools would know how much to charge for the use of facilities.

It appears that the multiple use of public school facilities has a specific application in smaller towns with a declining population. There is some question as to the viability of a church in a community with a declining population whereas a school will die only if the community dies. It would be senseless to invest any money in the construction or purchase of church facilities in such a community. There are several towns in Montana whose economy is strictly agricultural or mining with declining populations.

APPENDIX I

OTHER MEANS TO UTILIZE SCHOOL FACILITIES

There are several other means being employed to more economically utilize school facilities. To mention two, the year-around-school and the varied tuition program. Valley View Elementary District near Lockport, Illinois (in suburban Chicago) was faced with the choice of going to half day sessions or overcrowded classrooms with fifty or more pupils. Unable to legally issue any more bonds to finance more needed classrooms, the district decided to use a year-around school plan. The "45-;5 Continuous School Year Plan" was implemented by Valley View on June 30, 1970. Each pupil attends forty-five consecutive class days (about nine weeks) through primary and Junior High School. All pupils have the week-ends, normal holidays, and traditional Christmas and Easter seasons off. A two-week vacation period for all students is planned around July 4 to permit building and bus maintenance and to make recycling adjustments for the next year's calendar. The district's Business Manager said, "I built \$6,000,000 worth of classrooms, two schools, and it didn't cost anybody a cent."¹ The salaries of two principals,

¹Driscoll, Thomas F., "School Around the Calendar," American Education, March 7, 1971, p. 22.

two assistants and two custodial and office staffs were saved. In addition, no new grass had to be cut, desks bought, or libraries equipped.²

In addition to the economic gain, the year-around school offers opportunities for acceleration and eliminates the summer "forgetting time." Atlanta, Georgia's year-around program was designed to offer a better education for students. However, an economic gain was also realized.³

The varied tuition plan is used by colleges in an attempt to spread out the use of facilities. A lower tuition fee is charged in the summer quarter (sessions) and a higher fee is charged in the fall quarter to equalize the student load over the entire year, not just the traditional fall, winter, and spring sessions.

²Ibid., p. 21-23.

³Ibid., p. 21.

APPENDIX II

QUESTIONNAIRES

A questionnaire with cover letter was sent out. The cover letter gave the title and a brief description of the study. The questionnaire sent to Superintendents of Schools and the Boards of Education was designed to gather data on the schools' present policy on after-school use of facilities and fees charged (if any) for these facilities. In addition, it was also intended to determine if schools would or would not rent to churches for sectarian worship and under what conditions. (See Attachment 1).

The questionnaire sent to the churches was designed to gather data on the size of the congregation, the monthly operating cost of the church, what facilities are presently available to the churches, and what additional facilities the churches desire. The questionnaire was also intended to try to determine the willingness of the churches to seek or accept the idea of joint occupancy with schools. (See Attachment 2).

These questionnaires were prepared in as brief a form as possible in order to receive a fair percentage of replies and gather as much data as possible.

ATTACHMENT 1

SCHOOL QUESTIONNAIRE

Questionnaire Instructions: Circle answer or write answer in space provided. If more space is needed, use back or attach a separate sheet of paper.

1. What is your present policy on after-school use of school buildings?

(a) Are outside organizations allowed to use school buildings after hours? YES NO

(b) Do you charge a rental fee? YES NO

(c) Is rental charge flat or variable? FLAT VARIABLE

(d) What are the rental fees for the different rentable facilities for week nights and weekends?

Or, DO NOT RENT.

Nights	Weekends
Auditorium	
Classrooms	
Kitchen/Cafeteria	
Gymnasium	
Other	

(e) When was the last cost analysis to determine these rental fees made? _____

(f) Do you have special rental fees or reduced rates for churches, patriotic purposes, charity, etc.? YES NO

- (g) Do PTA, Boy or Girl Scout organizations receive the use of school facilities free of charge?

PTA BOY/GIRL SCOUTS NONE

2. Do you have social and recreational programs? YES NO

(a) What official controls the activities of these programs? _____

- (b) If under the control of the municipality, is the Board of Education reimbursed for the necessary expenses so incurred? YES NO

3. Do you grant the use of school premises to churches for the teaching of sectarian, denominational, or religious doctrines? YES NO

4. Would you rent school facilities on a long-term/semi-permanent basis (either annually or biannually) to church congregations for Church and Sunday School use?

YES NO

- (a) Would you place any restrictions on the church? YES NO

Explain briefly.

- (b) Would you be willing to add an organ for the church's use if requested? YES NO

- (c) What approximate fee would you charge the church?

FLAT FEE: Monthly_____, six months_____, or
annually_____.

VARIABLE FEE: Per hour_____, or depends on amount
of use_____.

- (d) If a profit could be made, would you actively seek this type of business with churches? YES NO

- (e) Would you accept this type of business if churches approached you and a profit could be made? YES NO

ATTACHMENT 2

CHURCH QUESTIONNAIRE

Questionnaire Instructions: Please circle answer or write answer in space provided. If more space is needed use back or attach separate sheet of paper.

1. What is the size of your congregation?
2. What facilities are presently owned by you or available to you through renting? Please indicate owned, rented, or not available. If rented, indicate the cost per month or year.
 - (a) Church building
 - (b) Auditorium
 - (c) Number of classrooms
 - (d) Kitchen facilities
 - (e) Gymnasium
 - (f) Other
3. What facilities do you desire which you do not presently own or rent?
4. What are the approximate costs involved in the monthly operation of your church facilities? Do not include parsonage.
5. What is the age and expected life of your church building?
Age _____ Expected life _____
6. If you were to rent public school facilities for Church and Sunday School use on a long-term and/or semi-permanent basis (annually or biannually):
 - (a) What facilities and extras would you require the school system to provide?

(b) What conditions for use would you require of the school system?

7. In your opinion, would your congregation accept the idea of renting public school facilities on a long-term basis if your space needs were satisfied and your operating costs reduced?

8. Would you actively seek joint-occupancy with public schools if your space needs were satisfied and the rent charged by the school system was less than your present operating expenses and capital costs? YES NO

Or would you consider entering into a contract only if contacted by the school board? YES NO

9. What problems can you foresee which might arise? Explain briefly.

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